

Influential Women Highlights Lori Croy, APR: Transforming Strategy Into Storytelling Through Strategic Communications

FULTON, MO, UNITED STATES, August 25, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Bringing More Than Three Decades of Experience in Higher Education, Government, and Consulting to Help Organizations Build Trust, Strengthen Connections, and Give Their Stories Purpose

Fulton, Missouri — Lori Croy, APR, is a seasoned strategic communications and public relations professional whose career spans more than three decades across higher education, state government, and consulting. As the Founder and Principal of Mentor PR, Lori brings extensive experience in strategic communications, public affairs, digital communications, storytelling, and organizational leadership to organizations working in government, education, insurance, and other mission-driven sectors.



Throughout her career, Lori has developed a reputation for empathetic leadership, audience-centered messaging, and the ability to translate complex organizational goals into clear, meaningful communication strategies. Her philosophy is rooted in the belief that communications professionals should be involved from the beginning of an organization's work rather than brought in only at the end to package a message. For Lori, effective communication is not simply about making information attractive or understandable—it is about helping people recognize why that information matters and how it connects to their lives.

Lori spent 25 years at the University of Missouri, where she helped pioneer web communications during a period when digital strategy was still emerging. As technology transformed how

institutions communicated with their audiences, she became an important part of the university's efforts to adapt and create more cohesive communications across platforms.

Rising to the role of Chief Creative Officer, Lori led multidisciplinary teams responsible for the university's primary digital and creative communications. Her work helped unify print and online messaging across campus while creating communication strategies capable of reaching increasingly diverse audiences.

Her extensive higher education experience was followed by more than eight years in Missouri state government, where she served as Director of Communications for the Department of Commerce and Insurance. In that role, she strengthened internal and external communications across multiple regulated industries while advancing consumer-focused messaging.

Across both environments, Lori learned how to navigate complex organizations, work with leaders and subject-matter experts, understand technical information, and transform complicated ideas into stories that people could understand and connect with.

Today, through Mentor PR, Lori continues to use those skills to help organizations turn their strategies into storytelling. Her consultancy focuses on government, education, and insurance sectors, drawing on her decades of experience working at the intersection of communication, public service, organizational strategy, and audience engagement.

In addition to her professional communications leadership, Lori is an award-winning children's book author and an active advocate for literacy and storytelling. She holds Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) and is involved with professional organizations such as the Public Relations Society of America. She has also received honors including the PRSA Lloyd B. Dennis Award for leadership, ethics, and integrity.

For Lori, however, professional success is not measured solely by titles, credentials, or awards. Much of the foundation for her career was established during childhood on a farm in rural Missouri.

Lori attributes her success to her family and the values her parents instilled in her. She grew up in a large family with very engaged parents and grandparents, living next door to her grandparents on a big farm. There, she learned the importance of work ethic, having fun, asking questions without embarrassment, and understanding that all types of work have value.

Her father was an Army veteran and lifelong mechanic, while her mother was a working mother who spent years working in a grocery store and later in the athletic department at a university. Neither was college educated, but both were highly respected within their neighborhood and community for who they were, what they knew, and the contributions they made.

Those experiences gave Lori an appreciation for people from all backgrounds and for the value

of different types of expertise. They also taught her that while credentials are important, they are not everything about who someone is or what they can accomplish. Sometimes, she believes, people simply need someone to recognize what they can do and give them an opportunity to demonstrate it.

That philosophy has also influenced Lori's approach to leadership and mentoring.

Her children are among her greatest heroes. Watching them build their own lives and careers has given Lori a deep sense of pride and gratitude. She once imagined that she would attend college and earn her PhD, but although she did not follow that particular path herself, her daughter earned an Ed.D. in education and became a college professor.

Lori also sees elements of her own communication-focused career reflected in her children, all of whom have people-focused careers that require strong communication skills. She takes pride in the possibility that some of those qualities were passed down from her, just as she carried forward the values and lessons she learned from her own parents.

One of the most influential pieces of career advice Lori received came from her boss at the University of Missouri, who encouraged her to be strong, share her ideas, and be proud of them. She was specifically encouraged not to begin her thoughts by apologizing for what she was about to say, but instead to recognize the value of her own knowledge and perspective.

That encouragement helped Lori become more assertive and confident as she progressed professionally. She believes every young woman entering a professional field can benefit from having someone who believes in her, challenges her, and encourages her to recognize her own capabilities.

As Lori moved into leadership positions, that same mentor also taught her an important lesson about delegation: delegate wisely, but never give away every project that makes someone excited to come to work.

Lori has carried that lesson throughout her career. She believes that even as professionals advance into leadership, they should preserve some connection to the work that gives them energy, purpose, and fulfillment.

For young women entering communications and related professional fields, Lori encourages them to seek opportunities to do their best work and become their best selves. Those opportunities may not always come with the largest paycheck or the most prestigious title, but they can provide experiences that help shape who they become.

She also encourages professionals to examine what brings them genuine joy.

Why do they do what they do? Why did they choose their profession? Why do they continue

doing it? Why does the work matter?

For Lori, these questions are more than professional exercises. They are reminders of purpose.

In her office, Lori keeps what she calls a “wall of joy,” filled with quotes from her parents, messages created for her by her children, and photographs of family members laughing. The wall serves as a visual reminder of the people and experiences that bring happiness to her life.

On difficult days, when work feels frustrating or she questions whether something she is doing matters, the wall helps reset her perspective. It reminds her why she is sitting at her desk, why the words she chooses matter, and why communication can have an impact even when that impact is not immediately visible.

Lori also strongly encourages young professionals to find mentors. She believes mentorship can come from someone older, but it can also come from someone who has simply spent more time working in a particular profession. People need one another to succeed, particularly when navigating challenges that others may not fully understand.

One of Lori’s greatest professional concerns is the tendency for organizations to involve communicators too late in the process. Too often, communicators are brought in after research, strategies, or initiatives have already been developed and are simply asked to make the information readable, attractive, publishable, or newsworthy.

Lori believes communicators can provide far greater value when they are included from the beginning.

Their role is to understand the work, identify its significance, and uncover the “so what” behind the information. That means working with researchers, leaders, and subject-matter experts to understand how their work could affect the everyday lives of the people they serve.

For Lori, communicators are bridge builders. They help organizations build trust, create understanding, and prevent unnecessary divisions through thoughtful, purposeful language.

She sees a significant opportunity for organizations and leaders to recognize communications professionals as strategic partners rather than simply the people responsible for presenting information at the end of a process. When communicators are included early, they can help turn strategy into storytelling, giving audiences an opportunity to see themselves within an organization’s mission and understand how its work connects to their daily lives.

At the center of Lori’s professional and personal philosophy are three core values: honesty, integrity, and empathy. She also believes deeply in the principle of loving one’s neighbor and recognizing that every person has a story worth hearing.

Lori believes that everyone's story is unique. Understanding people means taking the time to consider where they come from, what they believe, where they hope to go, and what dreams shape their lives.

Those principles have guided her career and contributed to the recognition she has received from her peers. Her honors for leadership, ethics, honesty, and integrity—including the PRSA Public Affairs and Government Lloyd B. Dennis Award—represent qualities that Lori strives to embody every day.

For Lori, receiving recognition from her peers was particularly meaningful because it demonstrated that the values she has worked to live by are visible to others.

Through Mentor PR, her continued commitment to mentoring, her advocacy for literacy and storytelling, and her decades of communications leadership, Lori Croy continues to demonstrate that effective communication is ultimately about people. By helping organizations transform strategy into meaningful stories, she works to build understanding, strengthen trust, and create connections that extend far beyond the words on a page.

Learn More about Lori Croy:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/Lori-Croy> or through her websites, <https://www.loricroy.com/> & <https://www.mentorpr.net/>

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